

To the Honorable Commissioners of the FCC,
I urge you to retain the current rules. I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. I support retaining all of the FCC rules in question. These rules set limits on concentration of the broadcast industry and serve the public interest by preserving diversity of ownership in the broadcast marketplace. These rules are; The Television-Radio Cross-Ownership Rule, The Broadcast-Newspaper Cross Ownership Ban, The National Television Ownership Rule, The Duopoly Rule for Radio, The Local Television Ownership Rule, and The Dual Network Rule. As so many in our culture forget, democracy is an ongoing project; it is one of forging a political culture (the creation of "citizens"). Democracy is not merely the absence of dictatorship and the presence of elections. An uneducated and uninformed populace is a mob, and its leaders demagogues. The forging of national citizenship is inherently a call for an educated populace, for public debate and informed decision-making. Lifting of current FCC rules against market concentration will act only AGAINST the development of these attributes. As we have witnessed, the rise of the consumer-culture in the '50s and dominance of corporate structures over everyday life has dovetailed with the deep depoliticization of the U.S. Not just are people no longer encouraged to seek out understandings of their lives and of our political situation, present conditions make this attempt almost impossible. Where is one to receive information when media outlets are increasing homogenized, when investigative reporting staffs are dispensed with, and when new independent media outlets are unable to achieve an audience because that audience itself has been dumbed-down by lifelong exposure to these condensed media forms - network television, or perhaps the ubiquitous homogenized newspaper, identical in every city? The lifting of current FCC regulations will not help address this situation. In fact, it will act to hasten the already pathetic situation that is at hand. It will, however, act in the fiscal interests of powerful media conglomerates which already dominate the control of information that most domestic residents have access to. I urge you to retain the current rules.